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ABSTRACT

This paper addresses three current issues in connection with higher education: (1) bilingual education, (2) international students in the United States, and (3) U.S. citizens and resident aliens whose native language is not English. Changes in college and university graduation requirements are proposed that will encourage bilingualism, cause international students to maintain stronger ties with their home countries, and enable the United States to come closer to the ideal of a multilingual society. Programs of study might be offered that would require the students to complete half their coursework in another language, in addition to the programs in English already provided for monolingual students. For example, some universities enroll a large number of Spanish-speaking students. According to this proposal, half the law classes would be taught in Spanish. Both the monolingual English programs and the bilingual programs would be comparable and of equal worth. Since some U.S. citizens and resident aliens whose native language is not English sometimes have difficulties in their native language, it is also suggested that foreign language remedial programs, comparable to English remedial programs, be offered in the colleges and open-door universities. (Author/AMH)

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# Bilingualism for the Future

Dorothy Chase

## Introduction

This paper addresses three current issues:

1. Bilingual education
2. United States citizens and resident aliens whose first language is not English, and who are experiencing difficulty in higher education.
3. International students studying in the U.S. whose ties with their home countries become so tenuous that they hesitate to return home.

## Bilingual Education

Bilingual education has been defined as the involvement of two languages, one of which is English, as the medium of instruction. The use of both languages for the same student population is a key component of the total curriculum.

One can find a variety of elementary bilingual programs. There are Foreign Language Experience (FLES) Programs, Second Language in the Elementary School (SLES) Programs, immersion, submersion and transitional programs (Rand 1982:6-7). Studies have been made of these elementary bilingual programs; their failures and successes are known as well as the philosophies which guide them. However, there are only approximately half of one percent of U.S. elementary schools which have bilingual programs. Similarly, there are few secondary schools which have bilingual programs. In both the elementary and secondary schools most of the bilingual programs are transitional.

Bilingual children have been shown to measure at significantly higher levels than monolinguals when divergent thinking is measured (nonverbal ability), indicating that there are positive cognitive consequences to being bilingual (Kessler and Quinn 1982:60), even though the "cognitive orientation of thinking, reading and writing in two languages presents a major problem." (Rodriguez 1978:18-20).

Empirical studies in Canada to assess the linguistic, intellectual and attitudinal consequences of participation in immersion

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programs (show that the) students make impressive gains in fluency and communication skills, and that they are able to handle content subjects at appropriate grade levels" (Tucker 1974:67).

Those students enrolled in bilingual programs are shown to be enjoying their classes, growing in equal fluency in both languages, and to be ahead of monolingual students of comparitive grade levels. Some of these students are able to continue with bilingual classes in secondary schools. Many of them are not because there are few secondary bilingual education programs.

Immersion elementary and secondary schools also exist in France, Germany, Latin America, the U.S.S.R, Canada, the Arab world and many other countries. Since the inception of a strong immersion bilingual program in Welsh schools there has been "increased demand for Welsh instruction at the university level" (Fishman 1976:132).

Language conflicts in Quebec have made the U.S. cautious about developing a bilingual education policy for the public schools since it is thought that bilingual education might promote linguistically separate communities and social unrest. Although friction has also occurred between dissimilar linguistic groups in India, the widespread use of dissimilar languages in Switzerland, the Peoples Republic of China, and the U.S.S.R. has not caused social unrest; even though separate linguistic communities exist (Laughlin 1982:4-13). Even though linguistic differences might be prevalent in a society, there are many factors which might contribute to the unrest of any given community.

What do we hear of bilingualism in higher education? Some departments of education train students to teach in bilingual classrooms, Nothing more! What do we read in the journals concerning bilingualism in higher education? Nothing! Why? Bilingual programs do not exist in higher education. Since there are no bilingual programs in higher education the needs of the public schools are not being met. Since the example set by the elementary schools previously mentioned is not being emulated, the achievements made by the children in those schools do not accrue as the students become academically capable of further growth. Many elementary students return to being monolingual English-speaking because of the lack of bilingual programs at the

secondary level and in higher education. The time, effort and money expended during the elementary school years are wasted. It is as much a waste of achievement to lose the languages which these students have gained, as it is for the non-native English speakers to lose their native languages.

U.S. Citizens and Resident Aliens

In recent times large numbers of non-English-speaking people have settled in the United States (eg Vietnamese, Laotian, Hmong, Puerto Rican), as well as in some other countries. There are also people indigenous to the United States who natively speak a language other than English. In the next twenty years there will be large numbers of non-English-speaking students in U.S. colleges and universities who speak English as a Second Language. Spanish and Vietnamese speakers will form the largest groups. Many of these people have language problems which stem from an inaccurate grasp of either both English and their mother tongue, or with their mother tongue since they may have had a chance to develop their English at school.

After the Second World War, with the emphasis on national unity, existing immersion U.S. bilingual schools were viewed as a means of dividing communities along language lines since native languages, other than English, were maintained. It is known that language and culture are very closely tied together; and that disuse of one language, in favor of another, weakens the ties one has with ones own culture. The proponents of monolingualism failed to recognize that language, home and culture are inextricably linked to the community in which one lives; that loss of self esteem occurs as a peoples cultural identity is torn away from them. As self esteem and cultural identity are lost, so is pride in one's country. As a people are unwillingly divorced from their county they are cast adrift in a society which holds neither root, nor resting place.

Alternatively, those people with firm roots in a language and culture of their own are strong and adventurous enough to become involved in their country, to progress and to help others progress. These are the people who become leaders in their respective fields, and in their communities.

International Students

International students have found that their linguistic ties with their mother countries have become gradually weakened the longer they are away from home. It seems that no matter which foreign country students go to for further study, some of those students want to remain in the foreign country. Part of the reason comes with maturity and the desire to establish roots; part of it is due to a weakening of ties with home caused by the new experiences in the foreign country, and part of it is through use of the foreign language and disuse of the native language.

Nationalization and Immigration officials, and international student advisors, are required to see that international students on F1 visas return home shortly after graduation from college or university. Some international students have come to feel that they have been caught in a no#man's land between two languages and two cultures, with a third choice, another country - a new country - being the only way out.

> In 1976 there were 800,000 international students in the world. Today, (it is estimated that) there are probably a million. Many of these are in both Western Europe and North America. (Smith 1981:45-166).

Three-quarters of the international students in North America and Western Europe are in five countries: Canada, the U.S., France, Great Britain and West Germany. Some of the student flow is reciprocal beween these five countries, but most of it is a movement from Third World countries to the developed countries, The largest numbers of international students are in graduate school.

The international student gains a great deal from studying in a foreign country, but the host country also benefits. Some of the educational benefits of having international students are:

> . . . the stimulus of international contact, the contribution of (international) students to research programs, reciprocal access to other countries' institutions, collaboration in internationally funded research, (Bruce 1982:491).

Language study, the promotion of the free flow of knowledge across national frontiers and international cooperation are other benefits of

being host to international students. It is, therefore, to the advantage of the developed nations to assist in the education of Third World Nations; especially since education is considered to be a major form of economic assistance (Bruce 1982:489-491).

Similarly, there are many people involved in the marketplace who know the advantages of being able to read and converse in more than one language. Commerce, politics, international law, aspects of education, foreign travel, ad infinitum, demand a knowledge of another language.

Higher Education

Historically, universities and colleges have become known as bastions of tradition, and forerunners of change in education. It is at these centers of higher learning that theories, ideas, philosophies and discoveries have been created, voiced, fired imagination, and disseminated, causing change in the fabric of society. In today's world the universities and colleges continue in their leadership role, even though some major industries have entered the field of education, except in the area of bilingual education.

According to Rodriquez the cognitive problem of thinking, reading and writing in two languages (or more) is innate (Rodriquez 1978:18-20). One must experience language in each of these aspects, through all stages of cognitive growth, to learn how to think and feel in the languages known. One way in which one can become equally fluent in two or more languages, especially in ones professional field, is to receive coursework in more than one language.

In the humanities it is commonly accepted that literature be studied in the original language. French majors study Maupassant and Moliere in French, for example. Most of the students who graduate with a humanities language degree become teachers. At present, there are very few teaching positions available for the large numbers of humanities majors who graduate annually. However, there are large numbers of positions in both business and industry which could be filled by those same students, if they were able to use their foreign language in the marketplace. Unfortunately, the language of humanities and the language of the marketplace are not always interchangeable. There is a world of difference between crying,

'Romeo, Romeo, where art thou Romeo?", in whatever language one cares to use and trying to communicate in a second language about an important computer sale.

The tourist industry and the Parks and Forest Service are other areas which could employ large numbers of humanities language graduates if they learned enough, in their foreign language training, to intelligently conduct tours and discuss subject specific material in that language (forestry, for example).

There is a need for bilingual programs in higher education. Changes need to be made in college and university graduation requirements which will encourage bilingualism, enable the United States to come closer to realizing its potential of cultivating a multilingual society, and cause international students to maintain stronger ties with their native countries.

If a society in which people are more equal in their opportunities to experience success, and to exercise control over their own destinies, is to be created, we must deal with this issue of bilingualism in higher education ... (Apple 1983:326).

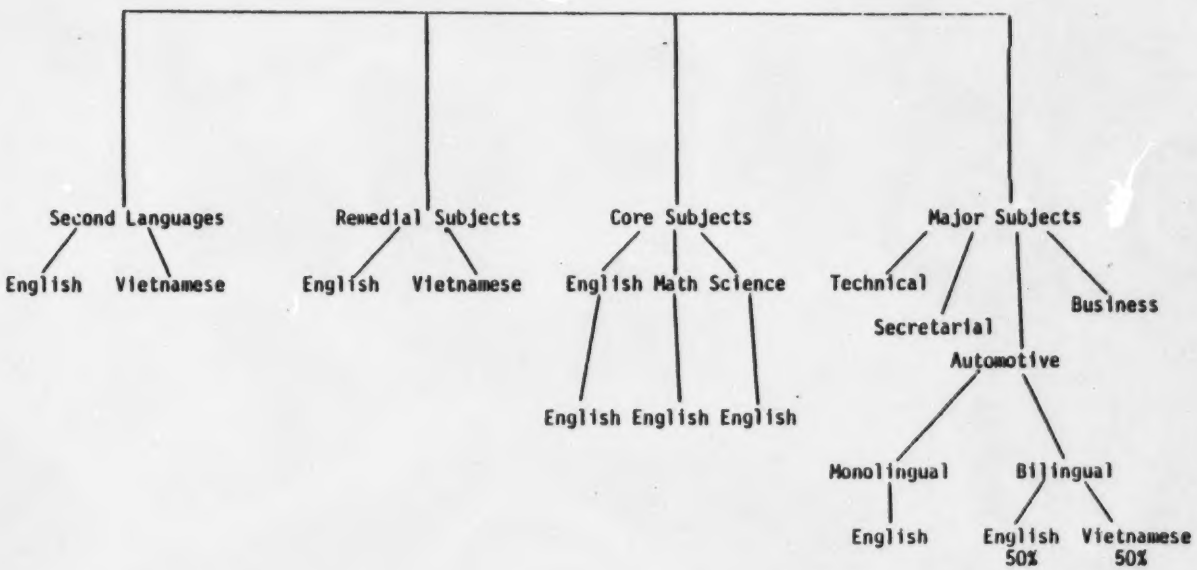
Junior and Community Colleges

If bilingual education is to succeed it must be available to all. Junior colleges and open universities have remedial English classes open to all students whose English is below standard. Just as many native-English-speaking people have less than standard command of the language, some other people have less than standard command of their native languages. In an area where there are a large number of Vietnamese, it would be reasonable to find classes in remedial Vietnamese for those who need to improve their Vietnamese language skills, as well as remedial English for those required to improve their English language skills. These classes would be in addition to the second language classes in English, and Vietnamese as a foreign language, provided for those who need them. The second language classes should be open to all who are interested. Those students who natively speak a language other than English should have that language fostered while they are learning English. Monolingual English speakers need to be encouraged to speak another language.

Figure 1 outlines a model of the bilingual program at a junior

FIGURE 1

Community and Junior Colleges



community college. It can be noticed that everyone will be required to take the core classes in English, and that those people enrolled in a bilingual program will be able to take 50% of their classes in another language. Ideally, the core subjects would also become bilingual. Such programs can, at first, only be instituted in areas where there are large groups of non-English-speaking peoples.

It is possible that dissension could occur concerning what version of the foreign language should be taught. Should it, for example, be Castillian Spanish, or Argentinian, or Mexican, or ...? The answer to that lies in the needs of the community.

There are some who might argue that a bilingual program such as this would be another compensatory program for minorities, and that it will cause education in general to suffer; that monolingual teachers will lose their jobs, that most teachers cannot become bilingual, and that the community will be divided by a plethora of linguistic groups. As I have previously stated, these things need not occur.

Education through the use of two languages as a medium of instruction is designed for all members of society; it is not for minorities alone. Minority students would certainly be more encouraged to enroll in bilingual courses provided in higher education, but also those students who are from the majority group would be encouraged to develop their language skills in areas other than English, particularly if they were entering politics or international relations, or other similar fields.

Those students who are successful in a bilingual program will become role models for their peers and those who are younger, thus building self esteem in others. For many students bilingual education programs, such as that which has been proposed, will be a step up the educational ladder which they might not otherwise have taken.

Universities

It is suggested that, where possible, two programs of study should be offered in the universities; one for monolingual students and one for bilingual students. Both programs would be comparable and of equal worth. Some universities, for example, have large numbers of Spanish-speaking students enrolled in law programs. According to

this proposed bilingual program, half of the law classes would be taught in Spanish and half in English. Bilingual programs, such as this, would be available to anyone who could meet the university or college entrance requirements, whether their first language was English or another.

Many universities are now requiring broader and deeper language study from applicants for university places. Theoretically, incoming students should be far more capable of handling lower division course work in a foreign language than were former students. Also, many of these students would natively speak a language other than English and be, perhaps, even more prepared for the foreign language classroom.

Figure 2 outlines a model of a bilingual program at a university. The General Education requirements are all in English; the foreign languages will be taught in the foreign language; the bilingual programs will be 50% in English and 50% in the other language(s) offered. Ideally, the G.E. program would also become bilingual.

The students would benefit by becoming conversant with the specialized language of other fields in more than one language, and the job market for them will immediately become larger. Use of both languages in the market place will help to increase feelings of self esteem in those who habitually speak a language other than English, rather than feelings of deprecation which have often been the case.

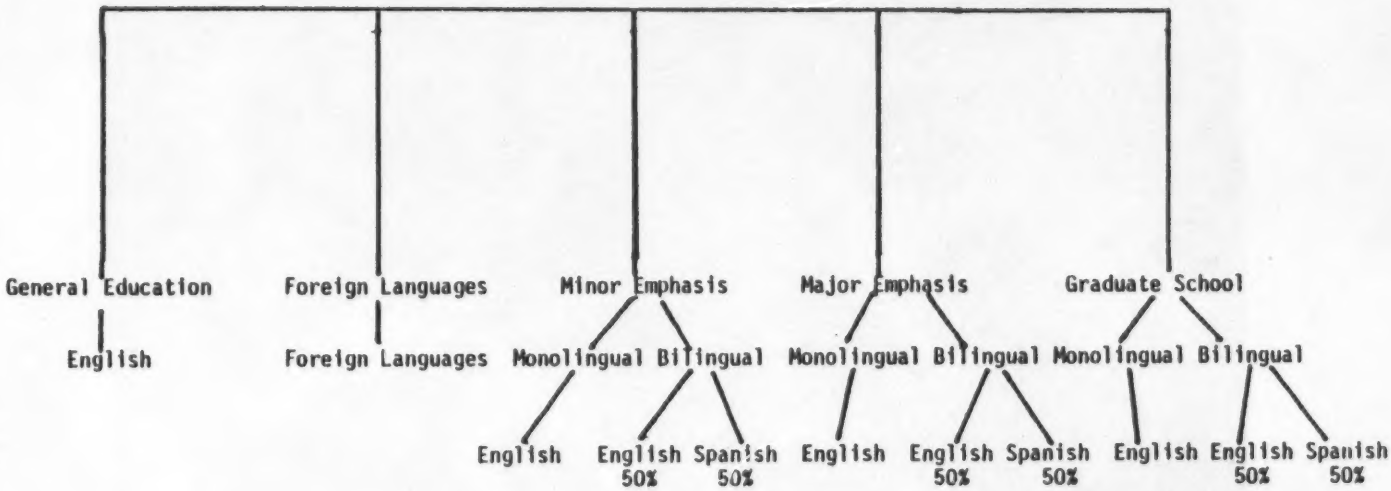
International students will feel more comfortable if half of their coursework could be accomplished in their native tongue. Also, they would be learning the specialized language of their fields in their own tongues, which would help lessen any feelings of foreignness which they might have upon returning home. In addition, such bilingual programs would lessen the need for translation in their native countries as a cadre of native specialists was built who were writing, publishing, and making formal presentations in their native tongues. Political and economic relations would be improved as more people entered those fields with fluency in more than one language.

Implementation of the Proposed Bilingual Program

In many universities, language study is required of many students if they wish to enter a university. Often, the foreign languages they learn are usually prerequisites for further language study or of

FIGURE 2

Universities



literature written in that language. The foreign language is not used as a medium of instruction for other coursework outside the humanities curriculum. There are universal benefits in acquiring and possessing competence in another language. Yet, as we know, there is a difference between knowing a language and being able to use it within the context of a discipline. Being able to converse socially is not the same as being able to discuss ones profession or vocation in appropriate terminology.

From this knowledge of the disparity between knowing a language and using it has grown the study of languages for academic, or other, purposes.

When implementing a new programme qualified personnel are always sought first. The European Community officially recommends to its member countries that the children of immigrants should have instruction in both their native language and the host country language. France has negotiated agreements with many of the countries of origin of its immigrants to sponsor integrated courses which provide immigrant children with three hours of instruction a week in their native language. The courses are offered if there are large numbers of children, and if there is parental demand. The teachers are paid by the countries of origin (Bruce 1982:63-64).

The Fulbright-Hays educational program has, since 1946, brought 85,000 foreign scholars to the United States. Forty million dollars was added to the cultural and educational programs last year. According to Weiker (1983:85) "these programs buy more security than the defense budget." These visiting scholars are fluent speakers of their own languages and eminent in their own fields. Why could not similar agreements be made with them to teach in the universities, as the French do with their foreign language teachers? The visiting scholars could teach in their native languages, and be paid either by the host universities, or by the institution, or government, from which they came.

In addition to the visiting scholars there are many indigenous teachers who are fluent in another language, who would be able to teach content subjects in that language. Some teachers could make the transition from teaching in English to teaching in the other

language without any problems, other teachers would need some time, and training, to make the change. If needed, teachers could be shared between the colleges and universities in local areas.

Foreign students on F1 and J1 visas are currently allowed a period of practical training in the host country after graduation. Those foreign students graduating with masters and doctoral degrees could remain in the host country teaching content subjects within their disciplines, either in the public schools or in an institute of higher education. Their remuneration could be negotiated similarly to that of visiting scholars.

Help could be sought from those industries which already employ bilingual professionals; lecturers or workshop leaders could be loaned, rotated into teaching, or be contracted to teach a single course; funds could be supplied for the writing or purchase of appropriate journals and texts in specific areas - the MBA programs, for example.

The community college, created to serve the needs and desires of the community, serves many people and often serves as a springboard into further study. It would be an ideal place in which courses could be offered in languages other than English; biology in French, for example, geography in Spanish, or history in Vietnamese.

Communicative competence in the subjects studied, as well as knowledge of the subjects, should be the goal in all classes at all levels of education.

The availability of textbooks would be the second issue. It woud be impossible to conduct a biology class in French while using English textbooks. Relevant textbooks and other materials could be bought from other countries while, concurrently, ones own educators could be encouraged to write and develop materials in foreign languages.

A third major concern would be devising ways to equally balance each half of the bilingual program. It must be required that a transcript, for a student majoring in bilingual education, show 50% of the coursework in English, and 50% in another language. Also, it would be advisable to plan the sequence of courses to be taken so that it would be difficult for a class to be composed entirely of students from one language background. The purpose of bilingual education

would be defeated if that were so.

Fourthly, we need to be concerned with those students, not in bilingual programs, but required to take certain classes which happen to be part of bilingual programs. If the required course is in English there is no problem; nor is there a problem if the required course is in another language, but the student is capable of taking the course in that language. However, there would be a problem if the student were required to take a class in childhood psychology taught only in Chinese. In today's computer age the planning of coursework within, and between, university colleges is not the problem it could otherwise be.

Lastly, there is the need to consider the cost of setting up the proposed bilingual program, and the time it would take to organize it. Many universities already have competent faculties, staff, visiting professors and graduate students who would be able to teach in languages other than English. There would be no need for additional classroom space, or other similar facilities, since many students already registered in the institute of higher education would transfer to the bilingual programs. There would simply be a need for reorganization of what was already available. Textbooks, teaching materials, secretarial time and computer time would initially command the largest financial outlay. Some of this expense would be offset if some visiting scholars and graduate assistants received remuneration from their governments or businesses, and by diminished expense on monolingual programs.

The time involved in setting up the program depends upon what the institution already has available, and what it is willing to do. Once the bilingual program is set in motion it should be with the tacit understanding of all concerned that it can, and will, work.

The key to the effectiveness of this proposed bilingual program is community need, and faculty interest.

There are no laws governing the institution of bilingual programs in institutions of higher education in the U.S.; there is simply an executive order which stipulates that the States are responsible for the education of their own citizenry. Similarly, the countries of Western Europe and Canada are responsible for the education of their

own citizens. It can, therefore, be implied that if people show a need for a specific bilingual program, or programs, that efforts should be made to meet the need. The need could be one of a large group of people with one common language other than English; or it could be the need of business, government and industry for bilingual employees, or it could be something else.

Administrators need to assess the present and future needs of the student body and community. Comprehensive planning requires the gathering of sound, clear, information; education of the community and faculty; and involvement of the community and faculty in all phases of the planning and building stages of the program. Active involvement of the community and faculty will enable the project to be implemented far more effectively than if they sit on committees. At all times attention should be drawn to the positive aspects of the program; and its function both nationally and internationaly should be examined frequently.

Teacher Training

The bilingual teacher training programs which currently exist have language teaching as their goal; that, as I see it, is only one aspect of a bilingual program. A bilingual teacher education program should require that 50% of the student teacher's major emphasis be taught in the foreign language.

A student who, for example, is going to earn a bilingual history degree must be able teach history in both English and another language with equal facility. Also, a bilingual student preparing to teach language must be able to teach English and another language with equal facility.

The teacher training program implemented should recognize the linguistic, ethnic, racial, economic, cultural and political settings of those who natively use the foreign language, while, at the same time, recognizing the fact that people are not bound by their cultures, and that they are free to be different despite the image of stereotypes. Bilingual teacher training should emphasize the development of cultural language attitudes, language skills and the acquisition of knowledge. The teacher must know the content of instruction

well, be able to use the foreign language to teach content, and must be able to transmit that knowledge to the students in a language they will understand (Troike and Saville-Troike 1982:217).

Summary

We are living in a multilingual society where it is an advantage to be fluent in more than one language, at least within the context of ones own vocation, or profession. Higher education, in its role of leader, must demonstrate how bilingualism can be fostered and maintained through the organization of bilingual courses of study.

Strong bilingual programs, in higher education, could lead to increasing numbers of indigenous, qualified, nonnative English-speaking students in degree seeking programs; to closer academic links with universities in other countries; and to stronger ties between international students in their home countries.

International relations would be improved, both economically and politically, if world leaders were linguistically competent in more than one language.

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